

Iraq Weekly Status Report

October 1, 2008

**Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
US Department of State**

Unclassified



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HIGHLIGHTS

- MNF-I transfers responsibility for Sons of Iraq in Baghdad to the Iraqi government (**POLITICAL, page 4**).
- Baghdad's Ramadan was the quietest in over three years (**SECURITY, page 8**).
- British Premier Oil PLC was removed from the pre-qualified bidders list (**ECONOMIC, page 13**).
- Iraqi President Jalal Talabani urged countries to open diplomatic missions in Baghdad and remove sanctions established against Iraq during Saddam Hussein's reign, during his address to the United Nations General Assembly. (**DIPLOMATIC, page 24**)



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

Iraqi Government Begins Taking Responsibility for Sons of Iraq Program:

- On October 1, MNF-I transferred responsibility for the Sons of Iraq program in the Baghdad area to the Iraqi government. The Sons of Iraq are informal security forces mostly composed of Sunni fighters who have actively aided in the fight against al Qaeda in Iraq since late 2006. American military leaders view this program as a key to the success of the American troop surge in decreasing violence across the country. The Iraqi government has claimed that it will give twenty percent of the nation's 100,000 Sons of Iraq jobs in Iraq's security forces and the remaining numbers will be vetted for civil servant positions. However, many Sunnis fear that the Shi'a-controlled government will not follow through on its promise or will disband the program in its entirety.

Iraqi Government Claims Red Crescent Officials Misused Funds:

- In July 2008, arrest warrants were issued for several Iraqi Red Crescent officials, including former Red Crescent President Said I. Hakki. While Hakki, an Iraqi-American urologist from Florida, was president of the Red Crescent, he sought the aid of U.S. lobbying groups and paid them \$1.1 million. The head of Iraq's Commission on Integrity, Raheem Hassen al-Igeeli, said hiring the lobbyists was "unacceptable" and designated it as a misuse of government funds. After the government issued the warrant for his arrest, Hakki fled Iraq; he claims the arrest warrants are an attempt by Prime Minister Maliki to remove him and other allies of former Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari from leadership positions.



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

Government of Iraq Engaged in Refugee Returns:

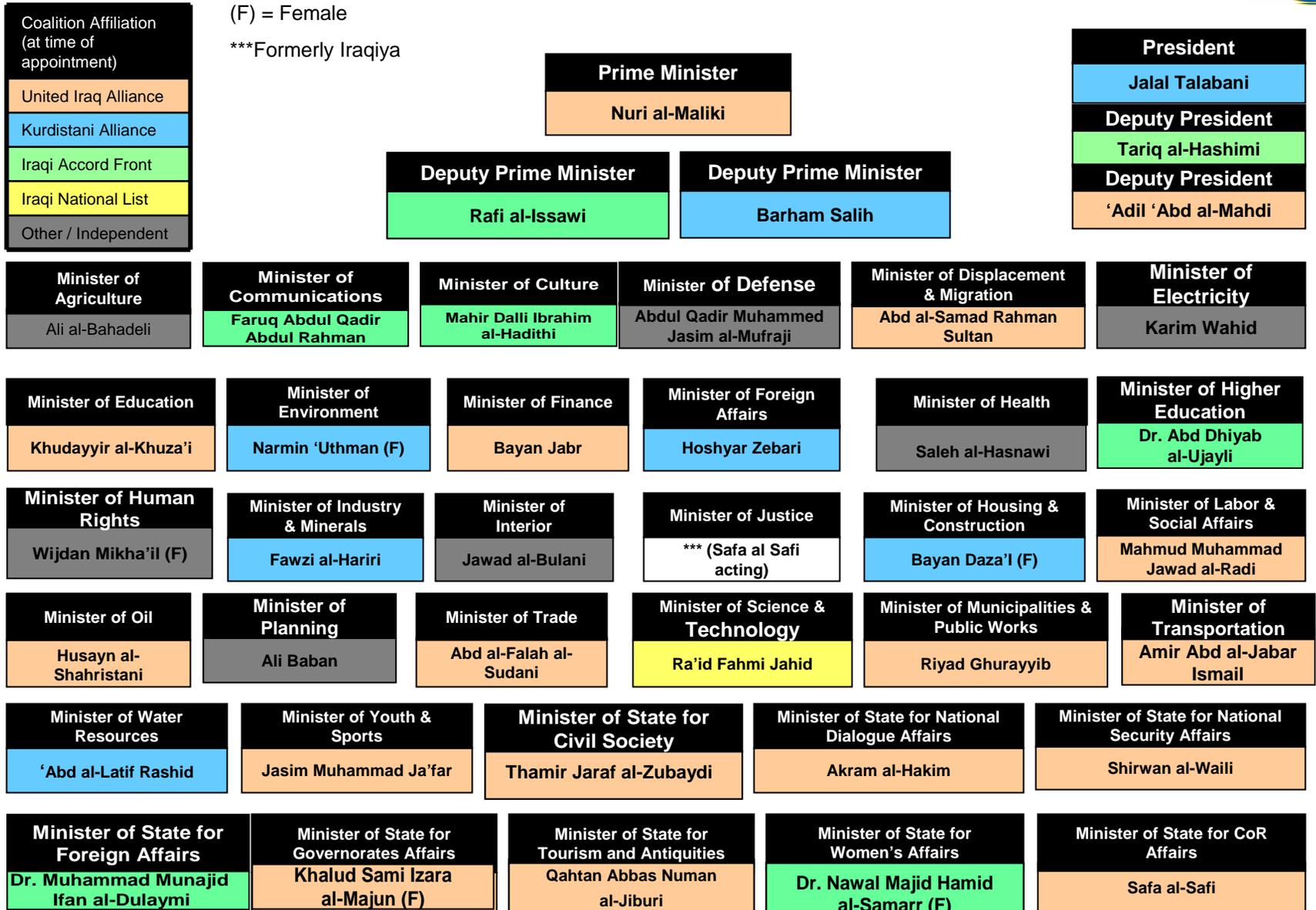
- Embassy Baghdad has reported that the Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration sponsored the September 29 return of sixty Iraqis from Jordan by bus. During September, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Amman paid return grants of \$500 and transport allowances averaging \$600 to approximately one hundred Iraqi families in Jordan intending to return. Regarding Syria, the UNHCR staff monitoring the Iraq-Syria border for ten days in September reported that ten to twenty refugee families were returning to Iraq per day. UNHCR plans to recruit additional staff to continue border monitoring.

Iraqi Leaders Seeking Solution to Minority Elections Quota Issue:

- Media reporting indicates that PM Maliki, in a September 28 letter, called on the Council of Representatives (CoR) and the Independent High Electoral Commission to “find a solution” to minority representation on provincial councils and stated that “minorities should be fairly represented in the provincial councils and their rights guaranteed.” The Provincial Elections Law, which was recently passed by the CoR and still awaits approval by the Presidency Council, did not include provisions for quotas for minorities, sparking strong reactions from minorities in Iraq and the Diaspora community. CoR Speaker Mahmud Mashadani reportedly asked the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary General de Mistura to propose a solution for the CoR’s considerations. The CoR is scheduled to return from recess on October 7.



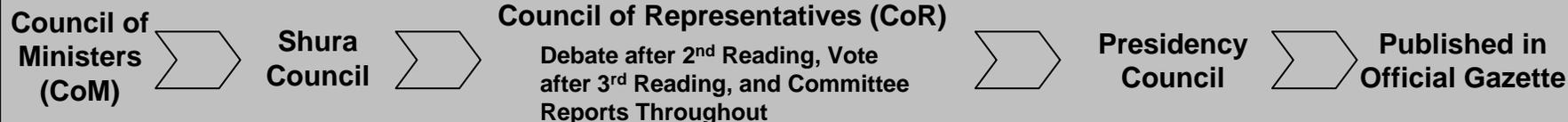
POLITICAL – Government of Iraq





POLITICAL – Key Legislation and Refugee Update

Legislative Process



Provincial Elections	PASSED: Passed July 22; vetoed July 26. On September 24, the CoR passed the revised law after voting on each of the vetoed articles. The compromise version of Article 24, the contentious article on Kirkuk, passed unanimously. The law must now be approved by Iraq's Presidency Council (which has ten days to submit a veto).
Hydrocarbons Package	The level of control allocated to the central government in the July 2007 draft version of the Framework Law (currently in CoR Committee) is the key point of disagreement; there may be more progress on the Revenue Management Law, currently with the Shura Council, in the coming months.
Amnesty Law	PASSED: CoR approved the law on February 13; the law was signed by the Presidency Council February 26 and was implemented March 2.
Pensions Amendment	PASSED: Published in the Official Gazette December 2007.
De-Ba'athification Reform	PASSED: Approved by default by the Presidency Council February 2008. Published in the Official Gazette in mid-February.
Provincial Powers	PASSED: CoR approved the law on February 13; the law was vetoed by the Presidency Council February 26. The veto was rescinded on March 19, allowing the law to take effect.

Refugee Update

Refugees in the region: 2-2.4 million

Internally displaced persons in Iraq: 2.7 million

The U.S. expects to admit 12,000 Iraqi refugees in FY08; 13,349 refugees have been admitted thus far in FY08. 14,957 Iraqi refugees have been admitted since FY07



SECURITY - Situation Update

Baghdad's Ramadan Quietest in over Three Years :

- Multi-National Division – Baghdad commander Major General Jeffery Hammond said September 26 that, in spite of recent attacks, Baghdad was experiencing the quietest Ramadan in three years. In the first 21 days of Ramadan, there were 60 attacks in the capital, compared with 600 in 2007 and 800 in 2006. Major General Hammond also stated there were currently 4.2 attacks per day in Baghdad, which is 83% fewer than in 2007.

Iraqi Security Forces Ambushed on Diyala Raid:

- A combined force of Iraqi National Police (NP) and Sons of Iraq (SOI) were ambushed while conducting a raid on the village of Othmaniyah in Diyala province September 24. The attackers were apparently tipped off about the raid and were waiting for the forces to arrive. Although there were conflicting casualty reports, an Iraqi Police officer speaking on the condition of anonymity claimed that 27 NP and eight SOI members were killed. Iraqi Security Forces have been conducting military operations within Diyala to eliminate al-Qaida in Iraq's presence in the province.



SECURITY - Situation Update

Over 14,000 Iraqi Detainees Released in 2008:

- Task Force 134, Multi-National Force- Iraq's (MNF-I) command in charge of detainee operations, has released over 14,150 detainees thus far in 2008, reducing the number remaining in custody to approximately 17,900. Since the beginning of the 2008 Ramadan holiday, 2,404 detainees were returned to their families and communities in recognition that they no longer pose a threat to Iraqi society. Brigadier General David Quantock, MNF-I deputy commanding general of Task Force 134, said that the increase in releases is largely due to the improved security conditions in Iraq.



SECURITY – Security Transition

ISF Performing Bulk of Security Duties Northwest of Baghdad:

- Iraqi Army soldiers and Sons of Iraq (SOI) security members are now performing the bulk of security duties in the area of northwest Baghdad, according to U.S. Army Colonel Todd McCaffrey. Colonel McCaffrey said September 25 that Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the SOI have limited the insurgents' ability to move freely within this sector, and that attacks there have dropped by more than 74% since December 2007. McCaffrey said that over 6,800 Iraqi families have returned to the area because of the improvement in security.

Iraqis Take Control of Ammo Depot:

- The Iraqi Army assumed control of the Bayji National Ammunition Depot from Coalition Forces during a ceremony September 29. The depot is the centerpiece of the national strategic ammunition supply and is the Iraqi Army's largest with more than 1,400 storage locations housing more than 250 million rounds of ammunition.

Iraqi Air Force Training Schools Graduate 291 Airmen:

- At a combined ceremony on September 29, 291 Iraqi warrant officers graduated from courses in Basic Military and Technical Training at the Air Force training school and Communications Training from the Iraqi Army signal school. Led by Iraqi instructors, the courses lasted approximately 60 days and focused on basic military training, aircraft maintenance, professional military education and communication training.



SECURITY - Iraqi Security Forces

Iraq Security Forces as of August 31, 2008 ^a			
Component	Current Authorized Personnel	Assigned Personnel	Total Trained Personnel to date
Ministry of Interior (Mol) Forces^e			
Iraqi Police Service ^f	330,880	298,369	196,781
National Police ^g	46,707	41,829	52,382
Border Enforcement	47,750	41,408	34,475
Total Mol	425,337	381,606	283,638
Ministry of Defense (MoD) Forces^h			
Army	170,512	183,756	228,737
Support Forces	15,583	19,896	21,144
Air Force	3,433	1,971	2,548
Navy	2,708	1,907	1,494
Total MoD	192,236	207,530	253,923
Counter Terrorism Bureau			
Special Operations ⁱ	4,733	4,043	4,564
Total Iraqi Security Forces	622,306	593,179	542,125

**The decrease in authorized MoD forces from the April 30 Weekly Status Report with ISF data as of March 31 reflects a change in a temporary GOI policy to increase front line units to 120% of authorized end strength to maintain present-for-duty totals at 100% while soldiers took leave. This change will make ISF reporting consistent with standard military personnel accounting practices in other countries and provide a clearer representation of ISF manning levels.

- Numbers do not include ministry staffs.
- Numbers reflect Government of Iraq (GOI) authorizations.
- Numbers are based upon GOI payroll data and do not reflect present for duty totals.
- Numbers reflect total Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) personnel trained to date, some of which are no longer assigned due to casualties, AWOL, and normal separation.
- Mol strength excludes other services within Ministry Of Interior (MOI), including the MOI HQ, MOI Forensics, Facility Protection Services, and contracted guards.
- The Iraqi Police Service consists of all provincial police forces (station, patrol, traffic, and special units) assigned to all 18 Iraqi provinces.
- Includes the national Emergency Response Unit.
- The Ministry Of Defense (MOD) authorized numbers are derived from Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTOEs).
- The MoD Army Training and Support Forces include logistics units and training center cadre.
- Does not include personnel assigned to Counterterrorism Bureau (CTB) or Counterterrorism Command (CTC) headquarters.



ECONOMIC – Economic & Government Capacity Update

Western Union Partners with the Investment Bank of Iraq:

- Western Union announced it signed the Investment Bank of Iraq as an agent to offer the full range of its services across all 19 branches of the bank, bringing the total number of Western Union locations in Iraq to 99. Jean-Claude Farah, Western Union's Regional Vice President for the Middle East, Pakistan, and Afghanistan said, "The Investment Bank of Iraq is a major institution in the country and we are pleased to be associated with them in extending our presence in Iraq. We look forward to a long and fruitful relationship."

PIMCO CEO Says Iraq to be Affected by Financial Crisis:

- Mohamed El-Erian, Co-CEO of PIMCO, said that Iraq will be affected by the downturn in the financial markets and the global credit crunch. In an interview with NRC, a regional European newspaper, El-Erian explained that companies looking to invest in Iraq will face difficulties borrowing capital to finance their ventures and added that the financial turmoil has not yet reached the emerging markets.



ECONOMIC – Oil

Crude Oil Update:

Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:

Basrah Light at \$95.49/barrel

Dated Brent at \$102.49/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$110.41/barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$95.42/barrel

Revenue estimates:

2006: \$31.3 Billion

2007: \$41.0 Billion

2008: \$53.2 Billion (ytd)

British Premier Oil PLC Removed from Pre-Qualified Bidders List:

- The British oil company Premier Oil PLC has been removed from the list of companies pre-qualified to bid for long-term oil contracts in Iraq, the Ministry of Oil said. An official from the ministry cited the company's failure to submit required documents and said that Premier Oil could still bid for secondary field contracts in the future; 6 state-run companies were also added to the list to bid for the development of the 8 large oil and gas fields.



ECONOMIC – Oil

Korea National Oil Company Finalizes Agreements with KRG:

- Korea National Oil Corporation (KNOC) signed final agreements with the Kurdistan Regional Government on September 26 for direct or buy-in rights to eight oil exploration blocks in the KRG. KNOC will be the lead company in exploration and production in the Qush Tappa and Sangaw South blocks and buy-in to the other six blocks. South Korea will make an initial investment of \$600 million for construction and development projects, and the total investment will reach \$2.1 billion when oil production begins. The announcement of the contract has not yet been verified by the KRG, which has signed more than 20 production sharing agreements since 2004.

British Oil Company in Negotiations for Oil Drilling Contract:

- The British oil company Mesopotamia Petroleum is in the advanced stages of negotiations for a joint venture with the Iraq Drilling Company, a subsidiary of the Oil Ministry, for oil drilling. James Milton, a spokesman for Mesopotamia Petroleum, said that the company remains optimistic a deal will be concluded soon. Iraqi officials expressed the possibility of concluding the deal by the end of the year; negotiations began a year ago, and involve the purchase of 24 rigs valued at \$311 million, which will increase the drilling capacity from 30 to 200 wells to help meet Iraq's goal of increasing oil production to 4.5 million barrels per day.



ECONOMIC – Essential Services

Food Rations in Iraq to Decline:

- The Ministry of Trade said that food rations in Iraq are expected to decline as a result of rising global food prices and a slumping grain crop in the country. Although \$5 billion has been set aside for food imports, the rising cost of food will most likely result in food rationing. The wheat harvest in Iraq usually exceeds 2 million tons but domestic demand requires nearly 5 million tons; last year's wheat crop was just 1.5 million tons. The rice crop fell last year by nearly half from 300,000 tons to 150,000 with domestic rice demand at over 1 million tons.

Iraq Signs \$1 Billion Water Contract with French-Iraqi Group:

- The Government of Iraq announced that it had awarded a tender for the Rusafa water project—valued at more than \$1 billion—to an unidentified French-Iraqi group to restore eastern Baghdad's water supply. Veolia Environnement and Suez Environnement, France's largest water and waste companies, did not comment on the GOI's statement, which did not name the company which won the contract. The project is expected to take 28 months to complete.



ECONOMIC – Essential Services

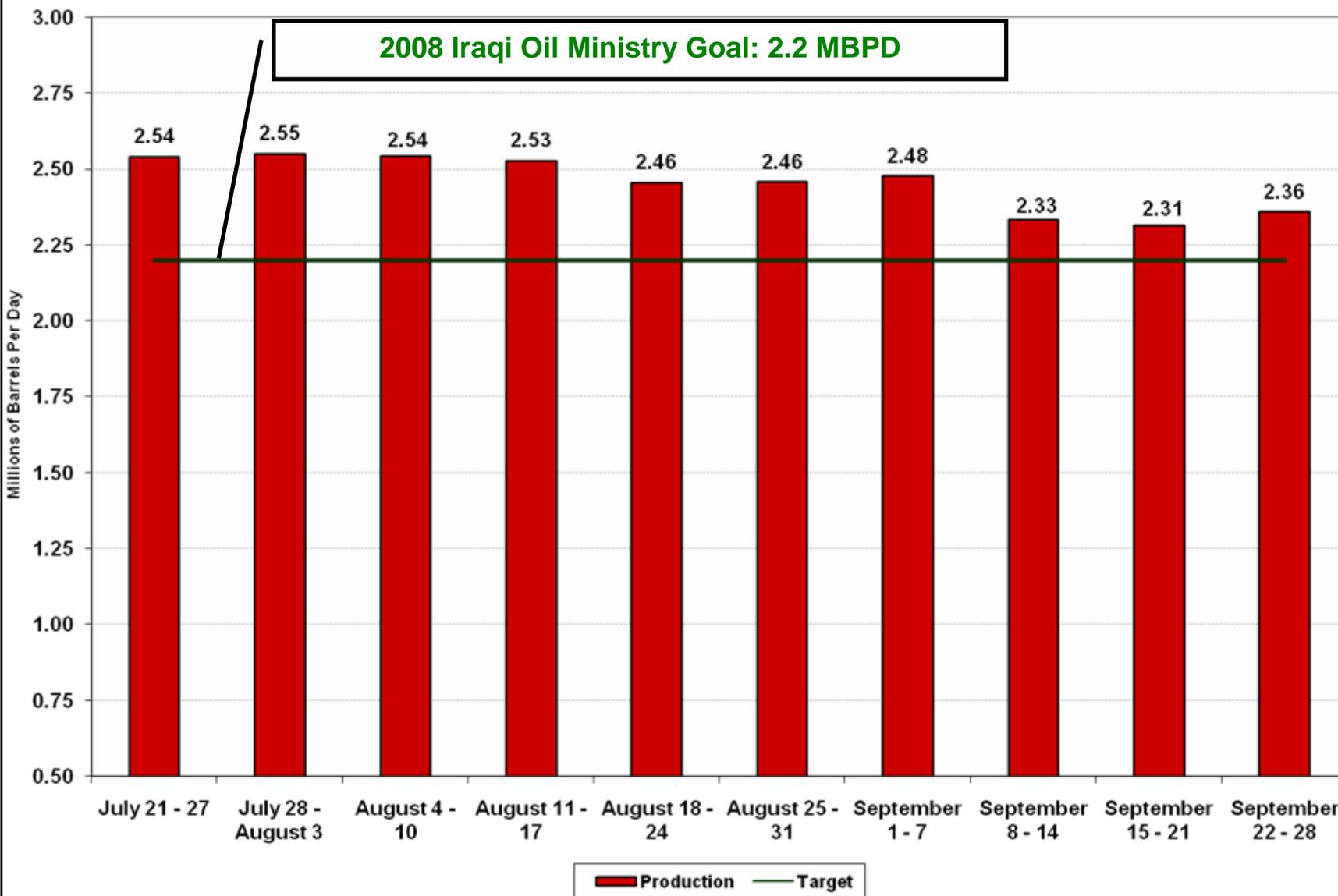
KRG Opens Bidding for Hydroelectric and Wind Energy Feasibility Studies

- The Kurdistan Regional Government is planning 3 hydroelectric plants and has invited companies to bid for contracts to carry out feasibility studies on hydropower plants and wind energy farms. The 3 plants – Halwan, Delga, and Gali Balinda – will have estimated capacities ranging from 52 MW to 111 MW. The terms of the contracts require that the companies have completed a minimum of 3 feasibility studies for hydropower plants and – for this feasibility study – survey the works for the dam and reservoir sites, complete hydrological, hydraulic, geological and geotechnical studies and carry out a hydropower plant study. The KRG has also put up for bidding a contract for a wind energy feasibility study in the Erbil, Dohuk, and Suleimaniah governorates. The deadline for bidding for both the wind energy and hydroelectric feasibility surveys ends October 20.



ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Production

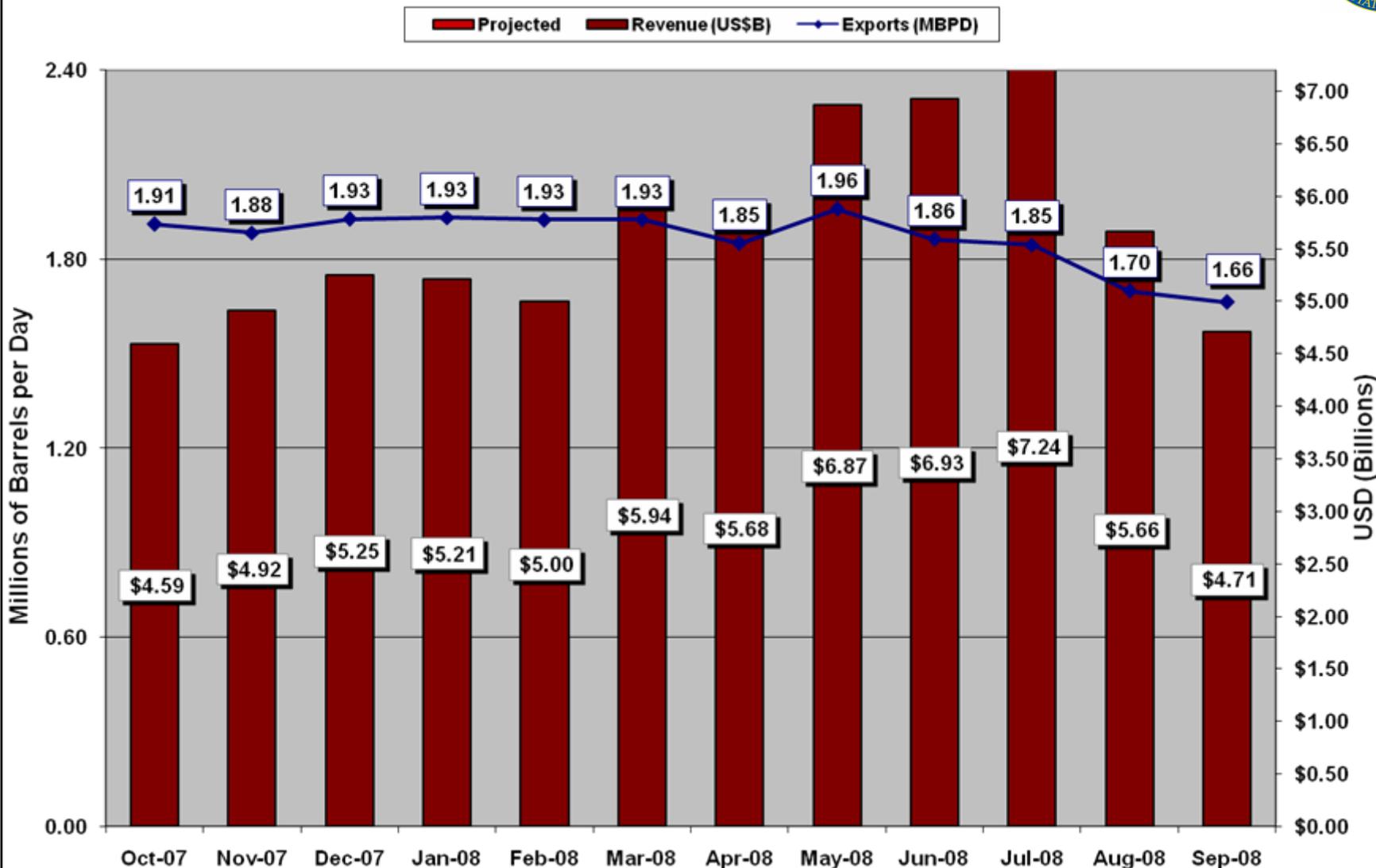
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ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Export

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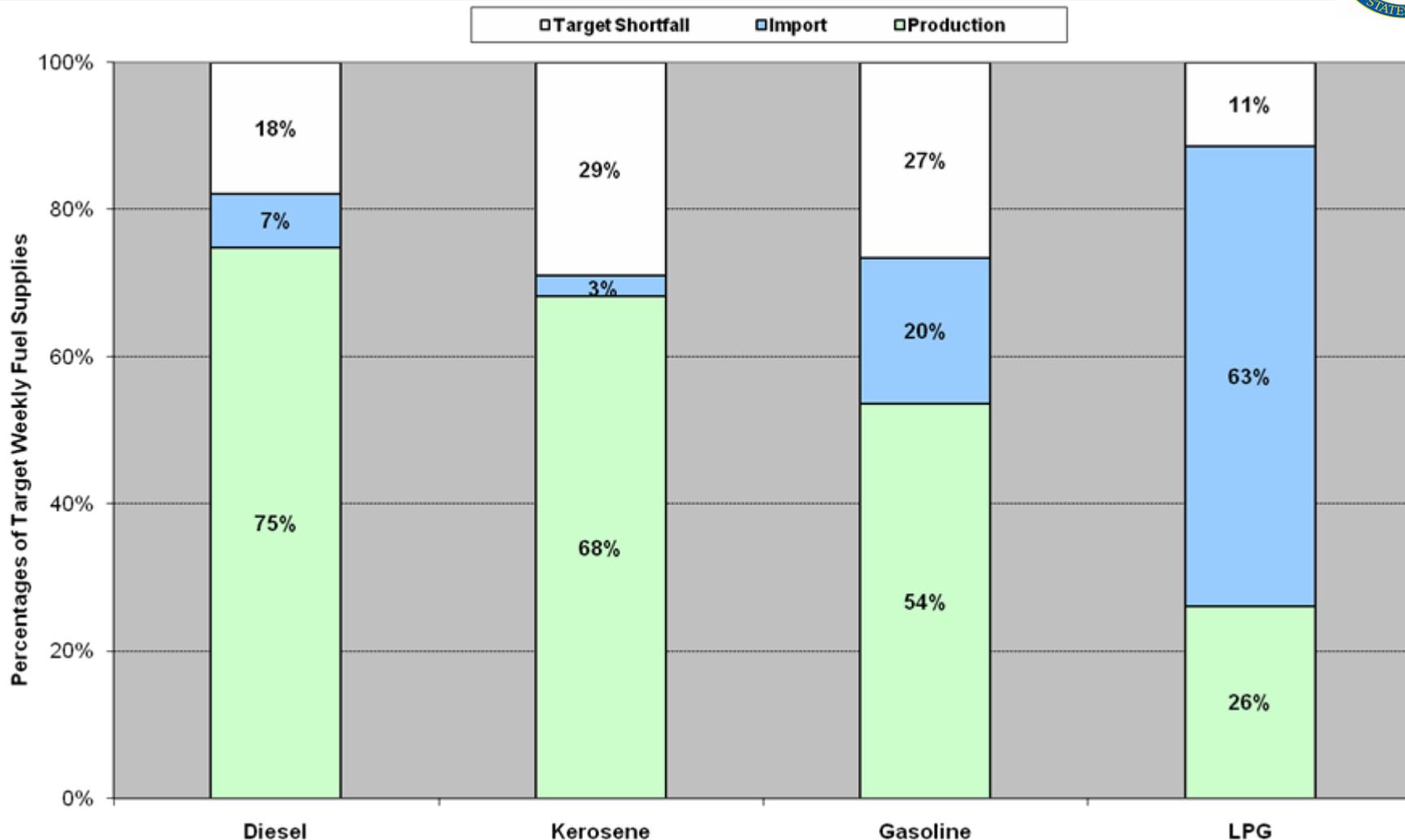


• 2006 Revenue Estimate: \$31.3 Billion 2008 Revenue Estimate: \$53.2 Billion (ytd)

• 2007 Revenue Estimate: \$41.0 Billion



ECONOMIC – Total Critical Refined Product Supplies



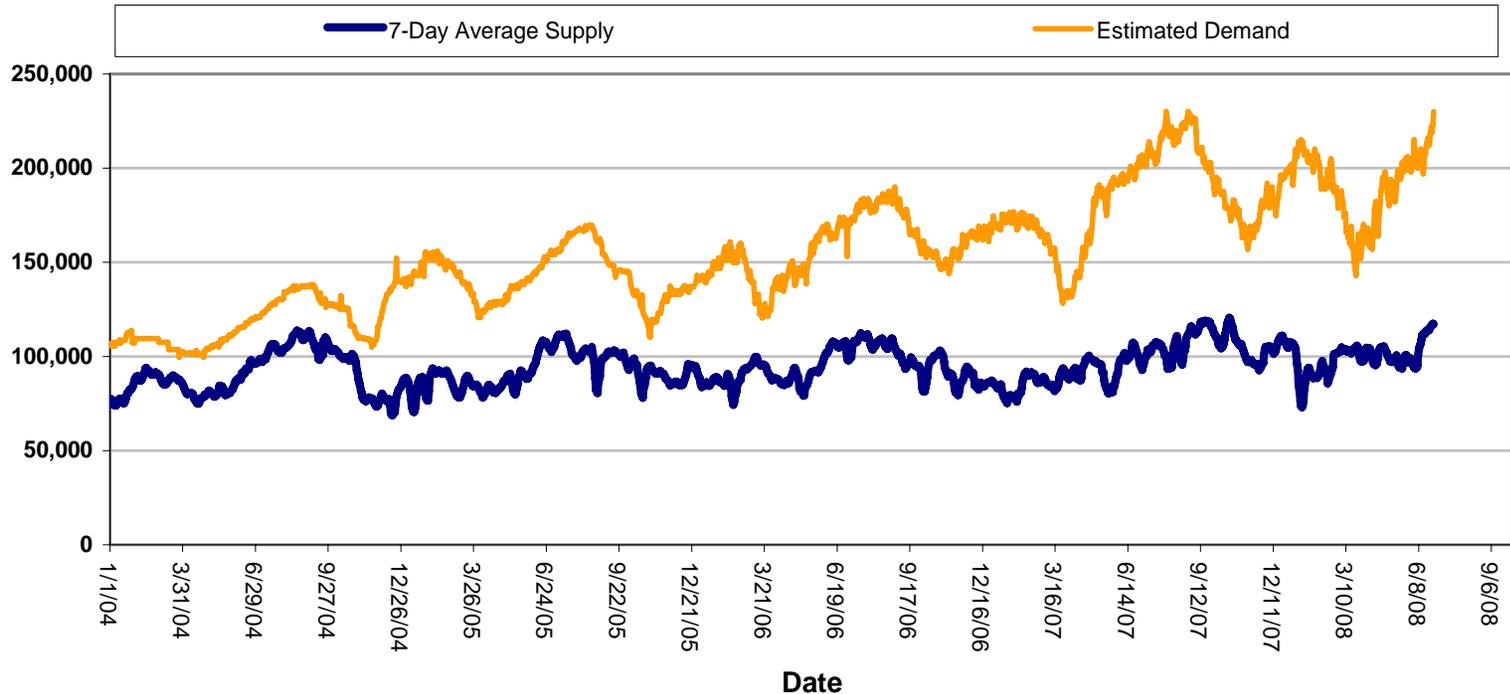
Note: This is a daily average for September 22 – 28

- Diesel: 20.1 ML supply of 24.5 ML target
- Kerosene: 10.4 ML supply of 14.6 ML target
- Gasoline: 19.7 ML supply of 26.8 ML target
- LPG: 4,521 tons supply of 5,100 tons target



ECONOMIC – Electricity

Daily Electricity Supplied and Estimated Demand in Iraq Since January 2004

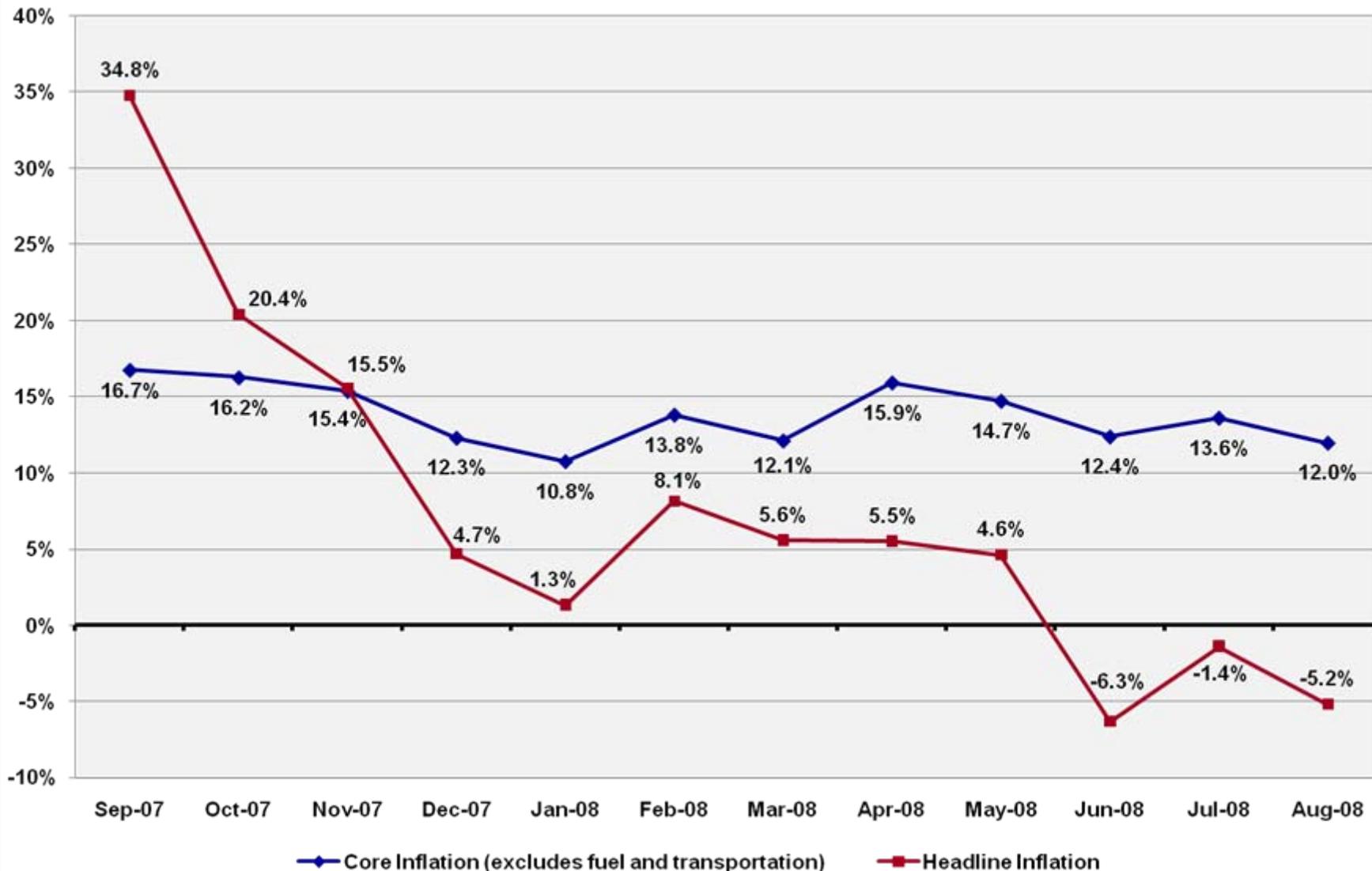


- Daily electricity demand September 23-29 was 5% above the same period last year. Daily supply from the grid was 10% above the year-earlier period and met 60% of demand, compared with 57% for the year-earlier period.
- For September 23-29 average hours of power from the grid after meeting demand from essential services were Baghdad: 13.9 and national 13.1 Year-ago levels were Baghdad 6.1 and national 11.7.



ECONOMIC – Economic Indicators

Year-on-Year Inflation



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ECONOMIC – Economic Indicators

Economic Indicator	This Week	Last Week	Last Month	Last Year
Iraqi Commercial Bond Sales				
Price (USD)	\$66.86	\$67.83	\$70.24	\$62.82
Yield	9.60%	9.46%	9.11%	10.16%
Central Bank's USD Currency Auction				
USD Sold	\$74,634	\$82,242	\$87,039	\$66,957,492
NID Exchange Rate	\$1,179	\$1,180	\$1,180	\$1,254
Total Employed by USG Programs				
	120,179	120,179	122,788	N/A



ECONOMIC - Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF) 1 and 2

Sector\Status (Millions of USD)			Committed			Obligated			Disbursed		
	Allocated	Un-allocated	Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change
Security and Law	\$4,960	\$17	\$4,937	\$4,937	\$0	\$4,937	\$4,937	\$0	\$4,869	\$4,869	\$0
Justice and Civil Society	\$2,299	\$20	\$2,264	\$2,263	-\$1	\$2,258	\$2,262	\$4	\$2,179	\$2,179	\$0
Electricity Sector	\$4,178	\$36	\$4,067	\$4,066	-\$1	\$4,066	\$4,066	-\$1	\$3,924	\$3,935	\$10
Oil Infrastructure	\$1,717	\$7	\$1,597	\$1,608	\$11	\$1,597	\$1,608	\$11	\$1,581	\$1,581	\$0
Water and Sanitation	\$2,054	\$21	\$1,981	\$1,980	-\$1	\$1,974	\$1,980	\$6	\$1,845	\$1,845	\$0
Transportation and Comm\	\$462	\$2	\$456	\$459	\$2	\$455	\$459	\$3	\$421	\$421	\$0
Roads, Bridges and Const\	\$320	\$8	\$282	\$282	\$0	\$282	\$282	\$0	\$257	\$258	\$1
Health Care	\$810	\$9	\$792	\$793	\$0	\$780	\$793	\$13	\$743	\$744	\$0
Private Sector Development	\$838	\$1	\$820	\$820	\$0	\$820	\$820	\$0	\$814	\$814	\$0
Edu\, Refugees, Human Rights	\$470	\$0	\$434	\$436	\$1	\$431	\$435	\$5	\$409	\$409	\$0
Admin Expense (USAID,DoS)	\$220	\$0	\$218	\$218	\$0	\$218	\$218	\$0	\$208	\$208	\$0
Rescission	\$0	-\$50	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total IRRF II	\$18,328	\$71	\$17,849	\$17,862	\$12	\$17,819	\$17,860	\$41	\$17,251	\$17,263	\$12
IRRF II Non-Construction	-	-	\$7,970	\$7,972	\$2	\$7,955	\$7,970	\$16	\$7,765	\$7,770	\$5
IRRF II Construction	-	-	\$9,360	\$9,370	\$10	\$9,345	\$9,370	\$25	\$8,968	\$8,975	\$7
IRRF II Overhead	-	-	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$517	\$517	\$0
Total IRRF I	\$2,475	\$0	\$2,291	\$2,291	\$0	\$2,232	\$2,232	\$0	\$2,139	\$2,139	\$0
Grand Total IRRF I & II	\$20,803	\$71	\$20,140	\$20,153	\$12	\$20,051	\$20,092	\$41	\$19,390	\$19,402	\$12

Data as of the 2nd of October 2008

Apportion amounts reflect those of the latest Executive Office of the President Report, published by the Office of Management and Budget. Committed, obligated and disbursed amounts reflect last numbers reported by each agency.



DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement

President Talabani's Speech at UNGA:

- During his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani urged countries to open diplomatic missions in Baghdad and remove sanctions established against Iraq during Saddam Hussein's reign. Talabani also asked UN members to drop or ease compensation claims, which were filed due to acts committed by Hussein. In an effort to persuade countries to increase their level of representation in Iraq, Talabani cited the successes of Iraqi Security Forces in Baghdad, Basrah, Diyala, and Mosul and added that the government plans to take over security responsibilities from Multi-National Forces in the rest of the country by the end of this year.

Talabani and Turkish President Gül Discuss Bilateral Relations:

- President Talabani and Turkish President Abdullah Gül met September 26 to discuss bilateral relations and Turkey's role in Iraq's reconstruction. According to the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Talabani conveyed the Government of Iraq's desire to improve cooperation on security, trade, and investment between the two countries. Talabani also affirmed the GOI's commitment to eliminate sources of instability between the two countries.

DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement



EU Ready to Resettle Iraqi Refugees:

- EU Ministers announced on September 25 that the European Union is ready to take up to 10,000 more Iraqi refugees and will send a mission to the Middle East to identify the most vulnerable people. Wolfgang Schaueble, the German Interior Minister, said the EU would make a final decision on the approximate number of refugees to be admitted by the end of this year and would focus on resettling minority groups.

DIPLOMATIC – Economic Engagement



GOI Renews Subsidized Oil Shipments to Jordan:

- The Jordanian Energy Minister, Khaldun Qteishat, announced September 24 that the Kingdom received 11,000 barrels of Iraqi oil. The shipment was the first delivery under a renewed agreement between the Jordanian and Iraqi governments, which was reached earlier this summer. According to Qteishat, the deal was for Jordan to receive 10,000 barrels per day at a subsidized price.



DIPLOMATIC – Coalition Contributors

25 Countries with forces in Iraq (including US)

Albania	Czech Republic	Kazakhstan	Mongolia
Armenia	Denmark	Korea	Poland
Australia	El Salvador	Latvia	Romania
Azerbaijan	Estonia	Lithuania	Tonga
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Georgia	Macedonia	Ukraine
Bulgaria	Japan	Moldova	United Kingdom

TOTAL ~ 7,100 Forces

31 Countries and NATO* (including the US) **Support Iraqi Stability Operations**

*31 includes the US, the 24 countries listed above, and six non-MNF-I countries: Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Turkey

Note: Fiji and New Zealand, participating as a part of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), are not included.



CONTACT INFORMATION

- This brief draws from multiple sources. References are cited on the following pages.
- Please forward all questions and/or comments to:
NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov



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Slide 17-19:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 20:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov
- The chart shows average daily power production in megawatt hours (MWh). 120,000 MWh goal equates to 20 hours at 6000 MW average supplied load or 24 hours at 5000 MW average supply load.

Slide 21:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 22:

- Derived from Multiple Sources. (ITAO IMU Essential Indicators Report, Baghdad, 02 October 2008) (Bloomberg) (Central Bank of Iraq, Foreign Exchange Auction, CBiraq.org) (<http://www.cbiraq.org/C.B.I.%20FOREIGN%20EXCHANGE%20AUCTIONS.pdf>)

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